

## STATE LYME HEARING 2/27/14

My name is Caye Helsley. I hold a Masters in Public Health and I have spent over 20 years in disease management for 2 large employers here in Hartford. Lyme education was my responsibility in response to the explosion of Lyme related medical claims that we were documenting. Despite that knowledge I am now a Lyme survivor – which means I have more than average damage b/c my Lyme was NOT treated in the first 4-6 month when treatment is most successful.

In my opinion, the state is contributing to an already dangerous situation by NOT having an advisory panel or ANY meaningful proactive education in the face of a *known* epidemic. Lyme is dangerous and poses an eminent threat to the residents of CT. I used to think Lyme was like strep, make people aware, treat it and move on. Now, I know it is more like MRSA, difficult to treat and down right dangerous when not treated early.

This bill is important first step because it raises awareness and educates staff and parents who are working with an at risk population ~ our children. In the absence of commonly accepted reliable testing, it is paramount that camp counselors and nurses be up to date and cautious every time a child presents with a rash, fever or flu like symptoms in spring, summer and fall. And like wise for all of the parents. MUCH LIKE THE EARLY BREAST CANCER BATTLES, EARLY DETECTION & EDUCATION IS ALL WE REALLY HAVE!!

In Summary, CT Lyme Patients are faced with an unreliable Western Blot AND no coordinated education despite living at “ground zero” for Lyme. Instead, let us work together, develop state warnings, raise awareness to match the threat, and improve early detection by both the public and physicians!

I can be reached at 860-918-4378 for any Lyme related questions.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO SEN. BARTOMELEO & DR SRINIVASAN FOR THEIR DEDICATION TO THIS GROWING PROBLEM.